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New York

President:	Mr. Hain	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Petrella
	Bahrain	Mr. Al-Dosari
	Brazil	Mr. Fonseca
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	China	Mr. Qin Huasun
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Malaysia	Mr. Hasmy
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Slovenia	Mr. Žbogar
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation in Africa

99-86735 (E)

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The meeting was resumed at 3 p.m.

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Sweden and Zambia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden) and Mr. Kasanda (Zambia) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Nigeria. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria): First, I wish to say that what I have prepared are talking points, more or less, because of the impression we had when we were invited to this meeting.

I wish to convey the appreciation of the Nigerian delegation to you, Mr. President, for convening this first interactive session of the Security Council on Africa.

Somehow it has become the tradition to treat Africa as a disabled child deserving special attention and treatment on all issues. It is in this context that I welcome the first step of the Security Council to learn firsthand of Africa, hopefully from Africans themselves. I also acknowledge with enthusiasm, and indeed look forward to, the possibility of a continuation of this initiative during the presidency of the United States next month. I only hope that it will not end there, as informal consultations to tackle the issues that have been drawn up here today should continue.

Given the format of this meeting, I want to focus on two broad areas.

The first is cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements in conflict resolution and management. In this regard, I shall be talking from my point of experience, which is my own subregion.

The Council will recall that the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) emerged as a result of initial lack of interest by members of the international community in the Liberian conflict. ECOWAS leaders rose to the challenge and successfully brokered peace in Liberia, and they are now active in ensuring that peace and stability return to Sierra Leone.

ECOMOG has thus become a veritable instrument for peacekeeping in the West Africa subregion. It has succeeded in preventing the chaos and horrendous human tragedies that characterized the early stages of the Liberian crisis. The recent United Nations decision to authorize the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was the type of response that ECOWAS leaders requested in Liberia but was denied. UNAMSIL, therefore, is a welcome initiative. It formalizes the type of partnership that should be struck between the United Nations and a sub-regional organization such as ECOWAS. Making this partnership work for the promotion of peace and security in this region will entail, first, regular consultation between the United Nations Secretary-General and ECOWAS leaders, and, secondly, commitment of resources by donor countries to support peace-making, peacekeeping and peace-building in the subregion.

The second area is conflict prevention. Let us now focus on how to prevent conflicts on the continent. The important issue that needs to be addressed is what far-reaching measures the United Nations and the international community can take to prevent the States that have just emerged from conflict situations from relapsing into conflict. It is widely recognized that States in transition from war to peace are always in a fragile situation. While they face mammoth problems in all sectors, they lack the resources and the capacity to address these problems in a very profound manner. The question being asked is why the United Nations and the international community are not showing the same enthusiasm to support the African States concerned so that they, too, can replicate the success of countries in Europe. The international community should, therefore, demonstrate the same type of commitment to Africa, which is so manifest in the efforts to rebuild European countries, particularly in the Balkans.

The current situation in which African States are left virtually on their own to tackle these problems is unsatisfactory. A sure way of ensuring that they do not slump into crisis and conflict is for the international

community to be actively involved in the rehabilitation, reintegration and reconciliation efforts.

Another area on which the Security Council needs to focus attention is the type of support it can put in place to prevent fledgling democracies on our continent from sliding into conflict. This decade has witnessed the transition of many African States from single-party and military regimes into multi-party democracies. Significant as this development is, it has not brought about improvements in the living standards of our people. The economic situation of many African States is such that African leaders are not in a position to initiate programmes and projects that will bring "democratic dividends" in terms of tangible benefits to their people.

My President, President Olusegun Obasanjo, put it aptly in a statement he made some years ago, when he said that democracy cannot be sustained on an empty stomach. The international community, therefore, needs to initiate far-reaching measures to assist these fledgling democracies to sustain good governance and democratic institutions.

These measures should include, first, the cancellation of the debts of African countries. If African States were free from their debt burden, they would be able to use the resources that would have been expended in servicing debts to execute important programmes and projects that would benefit their people.

Secondly, concerted international efforts should be made urgently to move African peoples from the misery and poverty that have come to characterize their societies as a result of conflict.

The President: I thank the representative of Nigeria for his kind words addressed to me.

May I say from the Chair and the presidency how much we appreciate the leadership that President Obasanjo is giving to the rebuilding of Nigeria.

The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Takasu (Japan): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to consider ways and means of strengthening the United Nations partnership with Africa.

Today I wish to make the following two points, taking into account the format and the goal of this meeting which you have proposed.

First, I must stress the need for the Security Council to respond to crises in Africa quickly and adequately. It is most important that Council members, and the permanent members in particular, conduct their work with an awareness that failure on the part of the Council to take necessary action in time will result in human suffering.

In this context, I want to touch upon the issue of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It is all too clear that if the peace process there fails it could have grave implications for the entire continent.

The Lusaka Agreement, which was concluded in July and which established a ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, is a truly commendable achievement by the African States concerned. It is therefore imperative that the international community extend its full support for it. I hope that the Security Council will act quickly to despatch the 500 military observers to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to consolidate compliance with the Lusaka Agreement by all the parties concerned, and that it will become engaged in efforts to deploy a full-fledged peacekeeping force as soon as possible. I would like to assure you, Mr. President, that Japan, which provides 20 per cent of the cost of any peacekeeping operation, would support any decision of the Council to that end.

Secondly, I stress the need to strengthen the capacity of the regional and subregional organizations to maintain stability in Africa.

The recent experiences of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) in addressing conflicts clearly demonstrated that there is a consensus among African people that regional and subregional organizations have an active role to play in the field of conflict prevention and mediation. But it has also become apparent that the ability of these organizations to play such a role is hindered by a lack of administrative infrastructure and financial resources. While I am fully aware of the cooperation already under way in this field between the Secretariats of the United Nations and the OAU, I would like to propose that the Council exercise

more vigorous leadership in mobilizing the international community to strengthen the ability of regional and subregional organizations in Africa to maintain peace and stability.

In this context, I would like to inform the Council that Japan will organize an international symposium in Tokyo this coming March on the roles of subregional organizations and non-governmental organizations in conflict prevention and resolution in Africa, to which we are inviting representatives of the United Nations, the OAU, ECOWAS, SADC and IGAD, as well as various research institutions and non-governmental organizations.

There is clearly a need for stronger leadership by the Security Council in raising international awareness of crises as they erupt in Africa. It is my sincere hope that, building upon our discussion today, the Council will hereafter have the ability to respond to crises in Africa in a more timely and effective manner.

The President: I thank the representative of Japan, particularly for his brevity, which is appreciated and I am sure will be noted by other speakers.

The next speaker is the representative of the Ukraine. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Yel'chenko (Ukraine): Like many other Members of the Organization, Ukraine is deeply concerned over the striking asymmetry between the great deal of attention that the Security Council devotes to African issues and the real achievements produced so far. Therefore, I would also like to express my delegation's gratitude for the commendable initiative of the United Kingdom's presidency, as well as to thank you personally, Mr. President, for inviting us to reflect on the situation and to discuss practical ways of heightening the effect the Council produces on conflict resolution in Africa.

I will limit my remarks exclusively to the questions outlined in your very helpful informal note.

Regarding your first question, it is undeniable that enhanced cooperation between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and major African subregional organizations would greatly contribute to achieving the objectives of peace and security on the continent. Many practical steps have already been suggested to improve such cooperation. Some of them have been institutionalized by the General Assembly or the Security Council. New creative ideas have emerged during today's discussion.

In view of this, the members of the Council may wish to start a process aimed at systematizing the wealth of different ideas and suggestions on the matter in a single document. It is of the utmost importance that such a document contain a number of clear directives and recommendations to various entities, both within and outside the United Nations system, to initiate or expedite implementation of specific proposals intended to improve interaction between the Security Council and regional structures in Africa. The Council should also conduct periodic reviews of the implementation processes and, if necessary, make relevant corrections.

In short, the Security Council should display more leadership and creativity in both originating specific proposals in this area and exercising efficient management in their execution later on. The members of the Council may wish to think about the appropriateness of creating a special subsidiary body mandated to coordinate its relations with the OAU and subregional organizations in Africa. In this regard, we welcome your proposal, Mr. President, on establishing a special mechanism to consider different ideas for consultation between the Security Council and the OAU.

On the issue of meeting requirements for African peacekeeping, I do not expect that our suggested solutions would be really original, but perhaps their prevalence reconfirms that they really matter. In the view of my delegation, besides the need for adequate funding, which is undoubtedly a sine qua non condition for any success in peacekeeping, there are two other distinct areas deserving special collective attention.

First, it is imperative to pursue the ongoing efforts aimed at improving existing United Nations mechanisms intended for ensuring availability and rapid deployment of peacekeepers upon relevant authorization by the Security Council. In the first instance, it is related to the United Nations standby arrangements system and rapidly deployable mission headquarters. The United Nations Secretariat and Member States should continue this endeavour, placing greater emphasis on specific requirements of peacekeeping on the African continent.

The second area relates to enhancing the peacekeeping capabilities of African countries with a view to enabling them to participate more actively in peacekeeping operations within the United Nations

framework. We commend valuable initiatives, which have been taken to that end in recent years. In our view, it would be important to secure a more centralized and all-inclusive character for efforts in this sphere.

With regard, Mr. President, to your third question — seeking suggestions for additional instruments to be used by the Council in conflict resolution in Africa — the current discussion clearly demonstrates that there is no lack of imaginative thinking in this Organization. Ukraine attaches particular importance to greater use of appropriate preventive instruments in respect to Africa.

In this respect, I would like to single out just one of those instruments, namely, the Security Council missions to the region, whose value was also underscored in your own intervention, Mr. President. We would urge the Security Council to explore more deeply the entire concept of such missions. For example, it is easy to imagine that in some situations those missions could have tremendous effects if they were to be sent at the early stages of a conflict situation.

We also encourage the Council to be more assertive in strengthening the effectiveness of arms embargoes in Africa and in addressing the problem of illicit arms flows on the continent. We know, for example, that the Council's current policy in this area has been largely focused on impelling countries to establish more rigorous national export-control procedures for arms sales in order to prevent any illicit transaction. At the same time, global experience convincingly demonstrates that no matter how strong the export-control measures a sovereign State establishes, they cannot give a total guarantee against subsequent violations by third parties.

In this connection, I would like to reiterate the proposal of Ukraine to convene under the auspices of the United Nations an international meeting of experts of major arms-producing countries, with a view to elaborating effective measures to prevent the reselling of arms by end users to third parties. It would be worth recalling that this proposal was made by the Foreign Minister of Ukraine at the meeting of the Security Council held at the end of September this year.

There is also one more point that has particular pertinence to the matter at hand and cannot be avoided in our discussion. This point relates to the problem of the Council's political will to respond adequately to conflict situations in Africa, as well as its willingness to share the cost and burdens of peacemaking action in that part of the world. One would hardly disagree that such will and such willingness are today among the most desirable instruments to ensure the success of the Council's activities on the continent. For its part, as an incoming member of the Council, Ukraine is determined to work closely with all Member States of the Organization with a view to achieving the success of the United Nations partnership with Africa.

The President: Could I say that I personally very much welcome the representative of Ukraine's suggestion for an international meeting on small arms sales and arm sales in general. As we know, UNITA is the recipient of arms from many arms suppliers, especially from Eastern Europe. That suggestion is very welcome indeed.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda): It is my pleasure to see you in the Chair, Mr. President, and we appreciate your initiative to call this important debate on the situation in Africa. We are equally grateful for the lead your Government has taken in devising a new partnership with our dear continent.

I would like to make a few points about this topic. One, which is more obvious today than it was yesterday, is the need to learn more about Africa.

As we debate the complex issue of conflict prevention, we should ask ourselves several crucial questions before we analyse the crux of the matter at hand, namely, how we should prevent conflict. There is a generalized tendency to always put the cart before the horse when we deal with African issues. The easy way out when we have failed to find adequate responses to problems that arise has been to conveniently call African issues tribal or ethnic, then adopt resolutions, take decisions and go on. Ultimately, the problems resurface some days later — or months after — and the lessons to be learned are never learned, and crises go on unabated. It is this trend of putting the cart before the horse and the failure to identify the real problem in real time that culminated in what this family of nations had said "never again" to.

Many so-called international experts on Rwanda have for a long time failed to relate the history of my country to the crisis it was drawn into. For example, calling people who spoke the same language and who had

the same culture, the same religion and the same political system "tribes" or "ethnic groups" and even "different racial groups" was and still is nothing but a sign of ignorance and double standards. The Council knows very well that in the same kind of blind anthropology we could be talking of Welsh, English, Irish or Scottish tribes today. But, thank God, that is not the case; and it should not have been the case in Rwanda either.

Not addressing the issues at stake in the Democratic Republic of the Congo today and dwelling on concepts or notions of invited or non-invited guests in the business of this Council is nothing but a diversion from the real problems to be solved. But, no, I am not saying that the meetings were useless.

Previous speakers have rightly said that it is high time we got people to learn about Africa as it is today, not as it was during or before colonial times. Africa has changed and is changing. It is certainly changing for the better, and we should help and assist it to take the next steps ahead and not discourage it through silence or conveniently undocumented decisions. More visits to the continent by the members of this body — and here we are grateful for the visit made by Ambassador Holbrooke — could add knowledge and enlightenment and provide corrections which is all we need in order to take the right decisions at the right time.

We need to position real and proper experts on Africa at all levels within this Organization if we mean well and good for Africa. You will tell me that, "Yes, there are experts". But are they really experts in every sense of the word? We should avoid piling mistake upon mistake while believing that we are doing well. We should never do that. Wrong approaches stem from wrong and false expertise; they, naturally, generate wrong notions and concepts that lead to wrong policies and wrong decisions towards Africa. This should be corrected, and it is correctable.

There is a need to do research and to coordinate findings and results with the African continental organization, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution. You cannot ignore the OAU any more, and you should not ignore it under any possible pretext. Africa has to have a say and should be assisted in doing so. The ideas we and they have, along with logistics and the resolutions of the Security Council would complement the findings I referred to earlier. This ought to be revisited so as to give a chance for proper coordination and understanding between actors in the search for common ground. The OAU and the Security Council should take the lead, as was emphasized earlier by previous speakers.

I would now like to speak about peacekeeping. Peacekeeping is a United Nations responsibility, and so it remains. Today, thanks to the large number of books, articles, eyewitness accounts, "lessons learned in Rwanda" units and so on that have emerged since 1994, we are beginning to know something about the events that led up to the genocide and how punctually and implacably it was carried out. We can measure the blindness of the international community at the time the order was given, at the very start of the killings, to withdraw the forces of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) — the peacekeeping force stationed in the country in 1994 — thereby abandoning Rwandan nationals to their own fate and to the mercy of the bloodthirsty Interahamwe militias, which are still active across the borders.

The problem is not the number of troops. The problem is the kind of mandate the Security Council gives and should give. We keep saying that we have learned our lessons after the pull-out of the peacekeeping forces that were stationed in Rwanda in 1994. We have come to learn that we actually had the full potential to halt the genocide if the Security Council had only mandated UNAMIR to do so. With just a change of mandate brought about with the flick of a pen and the adoption of a Council resolution under Chapter VII, we could have avoided the loss of more than 1 million lives. The intervention would not have required a major military operation. The killers were militarily incompetent mobs armed mostly with clubs, spears and machetes.

The Commander of UNAMIR at the time, General Dallaire — to whom we owe great respect and admiration for speaking out in due time — claimed that 5,000 men and a mandate would have been sufficient to stop the killings. To revisit the resolutions and actions taken afterwards is to understand the extent to which this body genuinely needs to be improved and to act in more thought-out manner. My delegation is glad to see such an initiative stemming from your presidency, Sir, which runs through to the year 2000 — a year we would like to see as the year for Africa.

As regards political will for timely action, and speaking from my delegation's point of view, the conflict we are witnessing today in the Democratic Republic of

the Congo is a legacy of the failure of the international community to intervene in Rwanda during the awful spring of 1994. It is not the result of non-intervention on the part of some members of the Council in 1996, as a handful of people are attempting to make the world believe today. They should have intervened then, in 1994, or soon after — not later.

They should intervene now and put the Lusaka Agreement into practice. The failure to maintain the momentum of July and August 1999 has led some actors to sing the same old tune of aggressors versus invited guests, as if this were timely and what people should be concentrating on at this stage of events. My colleague from South Africa said it better and in a more concise way.

Today's reports, which members have probably heard, say that President Masire of Botswana has finally been accepted by the two parties — the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the rebels — as their facilitator. We all know how forceful President Masire is, and we wish him well. We need to see more political will from this body in reinforcing its own decisions. We need to see sanctions committees, such as those on Angola and on Rwanda, take on their responsibilities fully and produce results, instead of the convenient status quo of silence, which sounds to some like complicity.

Let me conclude by saying that after Rwanda we had Sierra Leone, Liberia, the resurgence of the Interahamwe in the Great Lakes region, and the continuation of Somalia and other forgotten wars in Africa. We should ask ourselves questions in this respect. Why is it that this year, as tragedy unfolded in Kosovo, we referred to those who were masterminding the killings as "generals", whereas those masterminding killings in Africa are called "warlords"? Why are killings between Africans always described as tribal warfare, while killings between Europeans in the former Yugoslavia, for example, are always described as "ethnic cleansing"?

It is more imperative than ever that we all engage in some serious introspection and ask ourselves if we have truly learned our lesson. When we really come to terms with our past failures and arrive at a better understanding of the ever-changing and different social and political realities around us, only then will we be able to prevent the occurrence of future conflicts in Africa and in the world.

Mr. Aboul Gheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Many African States and their leaders sincerely believe that despite all that has been said about Africa in the Security Council and the General Assembly, these forums do not accord the same attention to Africa and its problems as they do to other international issues.

The Security Council must therefore always take action promptly when a situation arises that threatens international peace and security and requires United Nations intervention. Such action must be timely, effective and capable of achieving the Council's goals and its mandate.

Allow me in this context to touch on three points. With respect to the maintenance of peace, we do not agree with the concept of African peacekeeping, but we support the concept of United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa. We also support the strengthening of the United Nations role in that respect as we believe in the importance of providing the financial and human resources required for these operations, in a manner commensurate with the mandates and goals determined by the Security Council.

In those cases where the Security Council establishes a peacekeeping operation in the continent to be deployed alongside an ongoing operation by a subregional organization, the cooperation between the two organizations must be based on the comparative advantages of each one, so that their activities and functions are integrated, not duplicated. Of course, the mandate granted to each organization should be clear and specific so as to achieve this goal.

In any case, activities aimed at improving or upgrading the capabilities of African countries in peacekeeping operations should not lead or contribute to placing the burden of responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security in the continent of Africa on African States alone. The United Nations should shoulder its primary responsibility in this area.

On this basis, Egypt reiterates its position that establishing an African standing force to maintain peace in Africa is not feasible. The main reason for strengthening African capabilities — those of individual countries or of subregional organizations, or even those of the Organization of African Unity — must be to upgrade African capabilities so they can participate in United Nations peacekeeping operations on the African continent or beyond, particularly through what are called "standby arrangements".

Despite the fact that we welcomed the Security Council resolution establishing the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), we believe, as many speakers have already mentioned today, that the way the Council deals with the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and peacekeeping there will be the real test of the Council's credibility vis-à-vis Africa. The Council's commitment to bringing about peace and stability in the Great Lakes region will serve as the true measure of its success.

As regards strengthening coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity as well as other subregional organizations, we must first stress a key principle: the Council should deal only with those aspects of cooperation and coordination that fall within its competence and its mandate, since the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other implementing agencies and bodies have a significant and unique role in this context.

We also stress the importance of reaching an agreement on a framework for cooperation between the parties concerned and the international, regional or subregional organizations before proceeding to establish any operation, mission or task. This framework should clearly and explicitly determine the role and responsibility of each party or organization. What is more important is that each organization implement the parts that it has agreed to. For example, the United Nations, with the cooperation of the Organization of African Unity, contributed to the preparation of the Lusaka Agreement to bring about a ceasefire in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The Organization of African Unity, for its part, established a Joint Military Commission and appointed a mediator to conduct an internal political dialogue. We expect the United Nations to implement its part of the Agreement by establishing and sending a substantial peacekeeping mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Finally, with regard to the mechanisms for the prevention and settlement of conflicts, the Security Council might consider sending joint fact-finding missions, in cooperation with the Organization of African Unity, to find out what measures need to be taken to settle a conflict or to hear the points of view of the parties to a conflict or the African countries undertaking mediation efforts. More importantly, as a first step in preparation for undertaking a leading role in efforts to resolve a conflict, we believe that the Council must be more effective in coordinating African initiatives, whether national or regional. The crisis in Somalia, which has been continuing since 1991, is clear proof of the need to activate the role of the Council, rather than merely to support African efforts aimed at resolving the situation.

We should also consider establishing a permanent mechanism to coordinate the efforts of the Council and the Organization of African Unity — an idea that you, Mr. President, have put forward. This might take into account the side effects that could be caused by imposing sanctions on a State or a party in Africa as well as the ways to implement sanctions that are already in effect. Here, I must mention the positive role played by the Ambassador of Canada, Mr. Robert Fowler, in his capacity as Chairman of the Angola sanctions Committee.

In conclusion, I should like to express the deepest gratitude of my country to you, Sir, for presiding over the work of this meeting, and for the initiative that you have taken in this regard.

The President: I thank the representative of Egypt for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Mozambique. I should like to say how privileged I was to visit Mozambique last week with Her Majesty the Queen.

I invite the representative of Mozambique to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Santos (Mozambique): I have in front of me not a speech, but some notes. We want to start by registering our appreciation to you, Mr. President, for your initiative to hold this meeting. We believe that it is timely, and we want to congratulate you on what your country has done so far for Africa, especially in terms of poverty eradication. We believe that resolving the issue of poverty would help us solve many problems in Africa, including conflicts. We are facing complex situations, and we need innovative approaches to address them. I believe that this interactive debate will help us find them.

I would like to raise several points. First, I should like to say that Africans have the primary responsibility for conflict prevention, management and resolution in Africa. This has been emphasized by African leaders, who have committed themselves to taking action in this regard. But the Security Council has primary responsibility for maintaining peace and security in the

world, and that includes Africa. What Africa is seeking is equal and fair treatment.

We regard coordination and cooperation as essential, and in that respect we agree with your delegation, Mr. President. We believe that such cooperation and coordination should start within the Security Council itself. We have witnessed cases in which a lack of such cooperation and coordination in the Council, when decisions were not taken in time to avert problems. We are still facing that problem in relation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other situations.

It may be very difficult to recover from one missed opportunity. We believe that once a timely decision is taken by the Council, resources should be made available to match the magnitude of the problem. That principle has been emphasized throughout the debate this morning and this afternoon. We believe that once agreement has been reached within the Council on a particular issue, the actors within the country and within the region should be identified. It should be easy to contact them through the Permanent Representatives here in New York of the countries of the region affected.

Contacts should also be made with the leaders of the region, with the Secretary-General of the OAU and with the current Chairman of the OAU. The Chairman of the African Group for that month is also available for such contacts. I believe that both the current Chairman of the OAU and the Secretary-General of the OAU are available to come to the Security Council whenever necessary. Another approach which we think should be pursued in relation to Africa is the dispatch of Security Council missions to those areas affected by conflict. We believe that that practice would be helpful for ensuring that the decisions taken by the Council are informed.

We also believe that the opinions of the OAU and of African leaders should form the basis of decisions taken by the Council. The suggestions and recommendations that the Council will definitely have should not become conditionalities for action.

This morning Ambassador Holbrooke mentioned the issue of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and referred to the conditions that it is important to meet if a peacekeeping mission is to go the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We agree with him, except to say that the sending of a peacekeeping mission should not be held hostage to one condition — that of choosing a facilitator. We believe that choosing a facilitator is important, but we do not believe that it should hold up the process. Fortunately, both parties are cooperating in order to find a facilitator. We believe that that is important. But we are saying that we should not impose conditions, or the process will not be able to move forward.

We agree that all instruments available to the Security Council within its mandate should be used. Innovative ways to resolve conflicts, devised in order to meet specific conditions, should also be considered. We agree with the representative of Canada, who said that existing instruments should be made more effective. I think that is the most important part. Then we can create other innovative means.

We should learn an important lesson from the sanctions imposed on UNITA; in fact, they constitute an experience that, I think, will teach us many lessons. What is being done now seems to be effective, and we thank Ambassador Fowler for the work he is doing. We should learn from it and see how effective it is. We also consider the introduction of elements of post-conflict peace-building to be important, to allow a smooth transition and bridge from a peacekeeping operation to peace-building. Here, the difficulty is that the Security Council ends the mandate, but the problem actually remains. But if we have a smooth transition, other organs of the United Nations and other agencies will be working — such as the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). And we have the United Nations Development Group, which can ensure inter-agency coordination. We therefore think that there should be cooperation and collaboration also between the Security Council and all those other organs. I think that would create conditions for nationals to address the root causes of a conflict and generate solutions from within the country.

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is one subregional organization within Africa which has had good and bad experiences. It can lend its support to the work of the Security Council in resolving conflicts within the region. In the past few weeks a group of diplomats from SADC countries have been working with members of the Security Council and with other delegations on the issue of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. All those we have met so far have indicated to us that this is an important and worthwhile exercise. We believe this to be an important instrument in terms of seeking solutions to conflicts and other problems.

As the current Chairman of the SADC group, I would like to say that we will continue to work with members of the Council to follow up the conclusions of today's debate; we believe that the success of the debate will be judged by the degree of follow-up and concrete action that we are able to effect afterwards.

The President: I thank the representative of Mozambique for the kind words he addressed to me.

Let me say, simply to draw it to everybody's attention, that we have heard five speakers in the past 50 minutes, which by my arithmetic averages out to 10 minutes per speaker. At that pace we will not hear all speakers by the time I intend to adjourn the meeting, at 5.30 p.m.

The next speaker is the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kapanga (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): Today's open meeting of the Security Council on the situation in Africa — and more specifically on the partnership between the United Nations and Africa — is an initiative of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of its Permanent Representative to the United Nations. My delegation joins preceding speakers in sincerely congratulating you, Mr. President, and in thanking you for highlighting the importance of this debate by your presence.

Today's meeting is taking place just one week after the General Assembly's debate on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), during which Ambassador Baali, Permanent Representative of Algeria and representative of the current Chairman of the OAU, ably, clearly and eloquently set forth Africa's vision of the partnership between this world Organization and the regional organization that is the pride of all Africa.

The question of cooperation between the United Nations — and more specifically the Security Council — and the OAU is a timely one, given the many hotbeds of tension that have emerged on our beloved continent since the end of the cold war. If it is to be effective, that cooperation must raise the thorny question of the in-depth reform of the United Nations decision-making system, which must be able to adapt to the challenges of the emerging new world. Here, my delegation is thinking more specifically of the inexorable advance of globalization.

Under the Charter, the Security Council is the United Nations organ responsible for collective security and bears primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. Article 51 of the Charter recognizes the inherent right of States to individual or collective self-defence, although that must be seen in the context of Article 27, paragraph 3, which grants permanent members of the Security Council the right of veto, in effect institutionalizing the power to block the collective security mechanism. That has had a devastating impact on attempts to define the aggression against my country by its neighbours. It has also had a devastating impact on various initiatives to promote peace and national harmony within my country and within other African countries.

I wish on behalf of my Government to congratulate most sincerely the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, on his tireless efforts to bring peace back to my country and to see to that a United Nations mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo finally becomes a reality.

The system of collective security lost definition with the end of the cold war, and encouraged and tolerated the emergence of alliances. These diplomatic divisions or alignments with respect to open conflicts go against or even prevent the impartial functioning of collective security. Today's growth of alliances is broadly viewed as a consequence of the systematic blockage of collective security.

The way the United Nations has evolved reveals the close relationship between such alliances and the flawed functioning of the collective security mechanism. This has given rise to a diplomacy of coercion, which aims to resolve armed conflict and its uncertainties through the acceptance in agreements of conditions set by the party that proposed them. Crisis often limits one's options — especially the military option — to a choice between preexisting alternatives or plans. The resolute adversary does not generally face the same limitation, and theoretically enjoys freedom of movement.

So, in the case of the war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, my country is surprised at the inconsistencies that emerged within the Security Council. We are also surprised at how slowly its resolutions and decisions were implemented owing to the action of

certain Council members that opposed them. We note with regret that those members are actually perpetuating the poverty, desolation and suffering of civilian populations, including women, children and old people.

These States members of the Council do not hesitate to push their cynicism to the point of requiring that the adversary — whom they themselves have determined is the adversary — apply respect for human rights in a discriminatory way. It is astonishing that these same Council members are the first to deny civilian populations the same rights they are claiming to protect for them. This comportment is pathetic and deplorable.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, because of this irresponsible attitude, there are about 800,000 internally displaced persons and 200,000 refugees wandering throughout our national territory waiting while the Security Council, or certain member States, lose their way in the search for some solution to this war under the threat of deadly cannons from the east.

To conclude, my delegation believes that the current challenges most characteristic of the present period of uncertainty the world is living through are the threat of nuclear war, international terrorism by small, desperate groups, the drowning of certain regions such as the Great Lakes in great masses of foreigners driven by sharp economic and population imbalances and — why not — peace being bought at the cost of tolerating major crises.

Profound reform of the United Nations is overdue. The Security Council must undergo major changes, both in its membership and the use of the veto. Article 27, paragraph 3 must be amended.

The Secretary-General must no longer simply be the chief administrative officer of this Organization. An adequate distribution of powers between the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Secretary-General is necessary so that the Secretary-General, working closely with regional organizations, can define and carry out preventive diplomacy. This preventive diplomacy, in stabilizing a local conflict including by placing a military force in the situation, is the best way to prevent more widespread conflict between the major powers. This approach, namely in-depth reform of the United Nations system, is a prerequisite for this universal Organization to be able to tackle effectively the challenges of world peace and also the challenges of Africa.

My delegation assures you of its complete readiness to work with you when the time comes.

The President: I now invite Ambassador Chowdhury of Bangladesh to take a seat at the Council table and make his statement.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): We are happy that this open meeting is taking place today to discuss the United Nations partnership with Africa and how to make it more productive. My delegation appreciates the initiative taken by the United Kingdom under its presidency of the Council for this month. And we thank you, Mr. Minister, for personally coming here and conducting our meeting. We hope that the conclusions that you will be drawing at the end of the meeting will spur future action in this area. We also thank your Permanent Representative, Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock, for very effectively running the work of the presidency for this month. My delegation is also very happy to learn that during the presidency of the United States, next month, four meetings will be devoted to the discussion of issues on Africa. We welcome this initiative.

Bangladesh is grateful to the Secretary-General for his statement this morning, which contains a number of very specific and useful suggestions. We believe that it will be appropriate for the Council to focus on some of those. Since his report last year, the Council has adopted four resolutions and statements of the President. We believe that those resolutions contain very useful recommendations and suggestions. One of the first actions that the Council can take is to follow up on those four resolutions and let us see what can be implemented. At the moment, for this debate, we will make six comments regarding possibilities of action in this area by the Council.

First, on the question of regional and subregional organizations: in this context we refer to Council resolution 1197 (1998), particularly on the aspect which relates to the establishment of an early warning system. There seems to be emerging already a good trend in the association of regional and subregional organizations by the Security Council. The co-deployment succeeded in the case of Liberia. There is cause for optimism for a similar mission in Sierra Leone. So we would strongly welcome such a trend.

Secondly, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Mechanism for the

Prevention, Management, Resolution of Conflicts, Peacekeeping and Security: this Mechanism is very significant, and we believe that the Council may associate itself directly with such a mechanism by sending special missions of its own representatives. Here we would like to recall with great satisfaction the Council mission which Ambassador Andjaba led to East Timor. I think this is a precedent worth following in the future.

Thirdly, the Council should take a more proactive role and employ all the mechanisms available under Chapter VI of the Charter — negotiation, investigation enquiry, mediation; all these are very effective ways of resolving or preempting crises and should be taken advantage of. We are very happy that President Mandela has very graciously agreed to work as the facilitator in Burundi, and we believe that this kind of instrument or mechanism could be used in other areas too, in collaboration with the OAU and ECOWAS.

Fourthly, enhancing African peacekeeping capacity is also important. I think it has been recognized as an extremely useful instrument. Particularly, we believe that the relationship could be established with the existing regional peacekeeping centres in Africa, and we would encourage such a move by the Council and by the Secretariat in the future.

Fifthly, the Council's timely response to peacekeeping needs in technical and physical terms requires building a United Nations rapid deployment capacity. We believe that this area also needs special attention.

Sixthly, my last point is the issue of children and armed conflict. The Security Council adopted a resolution a few months ago, and we believe that this is an area which needs special attention in Africa. Two comments: one, relating to the Secretary-General's proposal for curbing the arms bazaar in Africa and this problem of illicit arms flows and small arms, and Security Council resolution 1209 (1998). We believe there is a lot there to implement; particularly, the Council can support the ECOWAS moratorium on import, export and manufacturing of small arms. I think this is an area for action by the Council. We would also like to say that addressing Africa's problems requires a simultaneous, system-wide approach, and I think that is one point we should not lose sight of.

Finally, Mr. President, as you conclude our meeting and draw some conclusions, we would suggest that the presidency might tabulate all the specific suggestions and ideas that have come up during our interventions in this meeting. Perhaps this tabulation could be made available to the delegations so that we can pick and choose and see how best we can move forward on all these specific ideas and suggestions.

The President: I thank the representative of Bangladesh especially for the very practical way in which he addressed this topic. It is much appreciated.

The next speaker is the representative of India, whose great country I also had the privilege of visiting last month. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Sharma (India): My delegation welcomes this interactive session on the United Nations partnership with Africa, and I am very happy to see you, Sir, presiding over it.

In September our Minister of State spoke in the Council when it last discussed Africa. We do not know to what use the Council put the views and ideas expressed at that meeting, but we hope that it will take seriously into account the views of States that are not its members. As merely symbolic gestures, such discussions will serve little purpose.

Respecting the time limit indicated by you, Sir, I wish to touch upon only some aspects of the questions you have posed.

Regarding how to improve cooperation between the Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), we feel that African countries are better placed to speak. However, as a general principle, whenever a conflict breaks out, or before it, when tensions rise, peace or calm can be restored only if the parties themselves are willing to resolve their differences. The first and paramount need, therefore, is for the countries most affected to show the political will to settle their problems peacefully.

The record in Africa is impressive. On almost every major conflict, Africans themselves have found, or are trying to reach, diplomatic solutions, as in Liberia, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi and Ethiopia-Eritrea. Once a framework has been drawn up for a peaceful settlement, international support often becomes essential, and the role of the Security Council then becomes crucial. The Council has several roles to play: in putting its political weight behind

an agreement, in mounting peacekeeping operations and in monitoring implementation. Here, regrettably, experience has shown that Africa's efforts have often been stymied or undermined by the lack of support from the Council. The solution for this lies in the Council alone. In the name of supporting African initiatives, the Council should not abdicate its responsibilities under the Charter.

On the question of meeting more effectively the African needs for peacekeeping, we welcome international efforts to strengthen Africa's capacity for peacekeeping and are happy to note that the Secretariat has been paying greater attention to this requirement, as detailed by the Secretary-General in his reports, including A/54/63 issued in February 1999. The Secretary-General notes that peacekeeping remains a vital United Nations instrument, and he has suggested additional steps through which incremental progress may be made to enhance African peacekeeping capacities. We are encouraged that some of his recommendations are being acted upon.

As the Secretary-General has said in one of his reports, despite the successes of the international community's action in Mozambique and elsewhere, the experience of Somalia still seems to haunt some members of the Council. However, the arguments of the high cost of operations or lack of resources or risk to peacekeepers are not tenable. A tardy and insufficient response by the United Nations only serves to send wrong signals to the parties and strengthens the view that Africa is being neglected.

A large number of speakers before us have spoken about the need for expeditious action in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The South African Ambassador said earlier today that the Democratic Republic of the Congo was the litmus test. We support the call for speedy action in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa, which has been used to support training activities in some countries in Africa, has received contributions from only one country. I am happy to say that this is your country, Mr. President. No further comment is needed.

On the question of additional instruments, we do not think that we need to look for new instruments to resolve conflicts in Africa. Existing instruments — if applied sincerely, impartially and in a transparent manner — are adequate. The problem has been that instruments at hand have not been used at all or have not been used well. An example of this is the fact that even though an arms embargo has been imposed against UNITA in Angola, it has no paucity of arms or other resources acquired through connivance or complicity. The Council must, therefore, pay greater attention to prompt and full implementation of its own decisions.

We have welcomed and actively participated in the Council's debates on Africa. However, the solutions to Africa's complex problems require a multidisciplinary approach with a strong economic- and social-development component. Such an approach is outside the mandate of the Council, and the nodal bodies for it are the General Assembly, the United Nations specialized agencies and the international financial institutions. While the Council must be more active on Africa, it should abjure the temptation to encroach on areas beyond its mandate.

In conclusion, let me say that India is proud of its long-standing links with Africa and its participation in almost every United Nations peacekeeping operation in the continent, starting with the complex and difficult operations in the Congo. Currently Indian troops and civilian police personnel are participating in three out of the four United Nations peacekeeping missions in Africa. Even as we discuss efforts to enhance the United Nations partnership with Africa, around 1,700 Indian peacekeepers are on their way to Sierra Leone to join the United Nations mission there. The international conference on United Nations peacekeeping, which we hosted in New Delhi in March this year, placed major emphasis on peacekeeping in Africa, with case studies undertaken on United Nations operations in Somalia, Rwanda and Angola. We made special efforts to ensure wide participation from Africa.

This, perhaps, is an area that the Council needs to look into. African States have developed expertise in peacemaking and peacekeeping which we need to draw upon. The Council and the Secretariat will find that it will repay them to listen closely to, and build upon, African experience.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of New Zealand. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Powles (New Zealand): I join others in very warmly welcoming this British initiative to hold this open debate today.

I am very conscious that there are many States with a very much stronger claim than mine to the Council's

time on this critical subject. I will therefore be very brief and approach the subject from the perspective of New Zealand's experience as a small contributor to peacekeeping efforts in Africa. Our commitments have included Angola, Somalia, Mozambique and Sierra Leone, as well as refugee relief in the Great Lakes region.

There is a widespread and understandable feeling that Africa is not getting a fair deal when it comes to the provision of United Nations peacekeeping resources. The credibility of the Council requires that it be seen as even-handed in its attention to crises, wherever they occur and whether CNN is there or not.

New Zealand is deeply concerned at the apparent trend over the past few years — to which there have been just some exceptions — away from financing peacekeeping by means of assessed contributions towards relying to far too great an extent on voluntary trust funds instead. This strikes at the collective responsibility that lies at the heart of the Charter. In practical terms it means that those regions that fail to attract donor support will not receive from the United Nations the response they are entitled to. My delegation was therefore particularly pleased to hear the clear view expressed on this by the Secretary-General just this morning.

The other side of this coin, of course, is that the parties to a dispute who have agreed on the need for a United Nations peacekeeping presence are obliged to do everything in their power to ensure the security of peacekeepers and the safety of other United Nations and associated personnel. There should, we believe, be a greater focus on prevention, especially through the Secretary-General's exercising his early-warning role, as provided for in Article 99 of the Charter.

Finally, as has been extensively reported, the root causes of much of the conflict in the region include the high level of poverty and underdevelopment and the inequalities in opportunity among different groups. The Security Council, we suggest, should make far greater use on these issues of its relationship with the Economic and Social Council, provided for in Article 65 of the Charter.

The President: The contribution of the representative of New Zealand is a model for everybody and I much appreciate it.

The next speaker is the representative of the Bahamas. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Moore (Bahamas): Let me say, as most of my colleagues have before me, how very pleased I am to see that you, Sir, have taken time to come to address this very urgent matter before us. Let me also say to the members of the Council that the idea of this open forum is indeed a welcome one and gives those of us who are interested in the stability of the world, and more particularly that of Africa, an opportunity to express our feelings.

I will be very brief. For the United Nations, there could be no higher goal, no deeper commitment, indeed no greater ambition than the preventing of armed conflict on the continent of Africa. I had the opportunity to read the report the Secretary-General presented to the Council last year and I also listened this morning to his statement and that of the Ambassador of Canada. Quite frankly, embodied in those reports and statements are solutions to the problems of Africa.

Rather than the lengthy repetition of the same things, it appears to me that there is a need for the political will not only of our member States of Africa, but indeed of the States members of the General Assembly and, more particularly, of this Council.

I listened to you this morning, Sir. You made a point of your being a son of Africa. I took that and examined it and found that this must be Africa's moment in history. Right now, today, the President of our General Assembly is a son of Africa; the Secretary-General is a son of Africa; you, Sir, are also a son of Africa; the Chairman of the parliamentary grouping of the Commonwealth is also a son of Africa; the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement is also a son of Africa; and so is the President of the Group of 77 and China. What more is needed here? It has to be the political will of this Council and, indeed, the members involved.

I read, too, the report of the African Economic Community and I know of its commitment to its Treaty and to the Organization of African Unity (OAU). We can go over the definitions and the problems as we have identified them over and over in this Chamber. What is needed now is action in Africa. We need a greater presence of the agencies of this United Nations and we need the resources to support and to implement many of the recommendations put forth in the Secretary-General's report and in the statement made by Ambassador Fowler of Canada.

I feel that this is the right moment. The interest of the world is focused on Africa. We should do all that we can, rather than talk about it again. We should use those programmes as laid out and put action behind them — put the resources of the world behind them.

I am going to be very nice by being very brief. I am going to end as I began. The political will that is needed for the correction of the problem in Africa needs to come from this Chamber. We can talk forever; we need to get the political will to act. I conclude by paraphrasing the Secretary-General: For the United Nations and its agencies, there can be no higher goal, no deeper commitment and no greater ambition than the prevention of further armed conflict on the continent of Africa.

The President: I hope that, in identifying all those sons of Africa, the representative of the Bahamas was not accusing us of reverse imperialism.

The next speaker is the representative of Kenya. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kuindwa (Kenya): It is so good to see an old friend and, indeed, a son of Africa chairing this important meeting on Africa. Your association with our continent, Sir — including my own country, Kenya, where you were born — gives me great hope that your important mission for Africa on the eve of the millennium will be successful.

Allow me to commend your predecessor, the Permanent Representative of Slovenia, Ambassador Danilo Türk, who presided over the Council during the month of November, for an excellent job well done. We also thank the Secretary-General for his focused presentation this morning and we associate ourselves with the views presented by the representative of Algeria on behalf of the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and by the representative of Cameroon, the Chairman of the African Group for this month.

Allow me to make two observations and some specific other points on some issues. First, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the Security Council. Regional, subregional and other efforts to address peace and security can only be complementary, but the United Nations system needs to encourage those efforts.

Secondly, after our recent tenure in the Security Council, we see not only that African issues dominate the agenda of the Council, but that most have stalled because of inadequate attention. We had hoped that, by the time our tenure ended, there would be definite movement towards resolution of some of these conflicts. Instead, and sadly, most continue at the same level of intensity, while others have mutated into even more complex crises. My delegation and I therefore welcome the statements made by the representatives of the Netherlands and China regarding this situation.

As concerns the issue of improving coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and the OAU, as well as key subregional organizations, including coordination of joint activities on specific issues, please allow me to make four points.

First, in our statement of 24 April 1998, before this Council, my delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's establishment of an Executive Committee on Peace and Security. We support its establishment and look forward to reports on its activities. We would also like to find out how the United Nations liaison office at OAU headquarters in Addis Ababa is doing, since it was mandated to consolidate cooperation between the two organizations and facilitate the coordinated deployment of political efforts to prevent, contain and resolve conflicts in Africa.

Secondly, the annual meeting of the Secretaries-General of the OAU and the United Nations is a good mechanism that could be re-energized. It would greatly assist the Member States to know how well this structure is working.

Thirdly, we wish to propose the establishment of a mechanism that would allow for quarterly meetings in which the secretaries-general, executive secretaries and facilitators of regional organizations and initiatives, such as the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the East African Community, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the Burundi initiative, among others, would meet to exchange ideas and consolidate conflict resolution proposals. We agree with the Secretary-General that such meetings should take place in Africa, and we commend these views for consideration by the Council.

Fourthly, it would be important to improve liaison with the African representatives at the United Nations in

New York by, *inter alia*, holding periodic meetings between the Secretary-General and African ambassadors and strengthening the office of the Adviser for Special Assignments Africa. We are grateful that you yourself, Mr. President, alluded to this idea in your remarks this morning, and we invite the Council to consider your proposals.

With regard to additional instruments which the Council can bring to bear to help prevent, manage and resolve conflicts in Africa, I would like to suggest that the instruments currently at our disposal, if effectively implemented, would adequately address the problems we are faced with today. In our view, the primary problem has been lack of political will and the reluctance to commit resources that are commensurate with the tasks at hand. Indeed, the Secretary-General speaks on this point in his report of April 1998. In this context, I have the following few points to make.

First, the number of resolutions adopted by the Council in the last two years on Africa is very, very impressive. However, all that effort has hardly left any imprints on the ground in Africa. The Council should therefore consolidate existing follow-up mechanisms and proposals and implement the resolutions on Africa already adopted, especially those aimed at the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Enforcement action, such as sanctions, works both ways. As already pointed out, those companies purchasing diamonds in conflict areas in violation of existing sanctions must stop. In addition, the sale of illegal small arms exacerbates ongoing conflicts. We commend the ongoing activities to address this problem, and we support the position that has been already stated by several delegations regarding the sharing of intelligence information on those who are busting sanctions.

Secondly, to underline the international community's concern with the potential threat to international peace and security, we invite the Council to hold one of its meetings in Africa. This will no doubt raise the symbolic political importance the world attaches to solving peace and security problems on the continent. In African situations where people are born outside hospitals, the umbilical cord is normally buried in the ground after one is born, and we know that you, Mr. President, as one who was born in that continent, will support the initiative to have the Council consider Nairobi as a venue for such a meeting.

Thirdly, there is a need for us to intensify coordination between the General Assembly, the United Nations Development Programme and the Bretton Woods institutions to address key economic issues which constitute the core of African problems, such as the issue of poverty eradication. We should also consider the issue of the debt burden, the financing of development and the impact HIV/AIDS has had on development. Although there are many causes of conflict in Africa, the underlying and core issue that of poverty.

Fourthly, the Council should consider diversifying sources of information to facilitate timely decision-making. A more intensive use of the existing Arria formula should include inviting all parties to conflicts and affected third countries. Summaries of meetings should be made available to all United Nations Member States in order to enable them to contribute directly to decision-making in the Council.

Fifthly and finally, regional cooperation and integration mechanisms must be strengthened and supported. The examples of IGAD and ECOWAS show that there is some capacity to cope with some of these peace and security issues. In this regard, on 30 November 1999, Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania signed the Treaty for the Establishment of the East African Community. In the coming months, we shall no doubt have the opportunity to suggest ways in which the Community can strengthen its relations not only with this Organization, but also will other regional and subregional organizations.

The President: I thank the representative of Kenya for his kind words addressed to me. The next speaker is the representative of Colombia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia)(*spoke in Spanish*): No member of the United Nations can possibly have failed to notice the degree of attention that the various bodies of the Organization devote to African problems. From our treatment of the problems on that continent, the international community can draw lessons regarding the maintenance of international peace and security, the administration of humanitarian assistance, cooperation for development and the promotion of human rights, among many others.

I do not intend to try to answer the questions so rightly raised by the Presidents of the Council. Rather, having heard the various statements of delegations today, another urgent question must be raised: we wonder whether the United Nations is acting effectively to face

the enormous challenge of peace in Africa. We ask this not so much in terms of financial resources or of the political will to act, but rather of the management ability of the Organization, of its capacity to benefit from the strength of the various organs and programmes with a view to achieving durable peace and sustainable development in the region, as suggested by the title of the Secretary-General's report last year.

Today we are focusing on the requirements for peace in Africa from the standpoint of peacekeeping operations and partnerships for peacekeeping with regional organizations. However, as other delegations have already pointed out, including those of Argentina and Brazil, how can we expect to find lasting peace without the benefit of a favourable economic climate so that peace can become rooted in the daily life of Africans?

It seems to us that in order to make better use of the scarce resources available within the Organization to achieve peace in Africa, it is necessary to improve the coordination between and harmonize the management of the various United Nations organs, particularly of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. In this regard, we agree with the decision of the General Assembly to establish an open-ended working group to monitor the implementation of the recommendations made by the Secretary-General in his report, taking advantage, moreover, of the conclusions arrived at by the Economic and Social Council at its last session. That is an appropriate body to bring together the various conceptions of our Organization on the best way to manage peacekeeping efforts in Africa. That is, if we are to establish better associations or partnerships, we should begin by doing so within our own Organization.

The Security Council may not be able to respond adequately to the major challenges of the African continent without real and effective coordination with the other principal bodies within their respective spheres of competence or under their corresponding mandates. I believe that the results of United Nations action could be far better if we could create the conditions for a more efficient presence of our system in the region.

That was the question I wanted to raise, and those were the reflections that I wanted to bring to the attention of the participants in the current debate.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Sierra Leone, whom I invite to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Rowe (Sierre Leone): Mr. President, my delegation would like to associate itself with the commendations received by you personally, and by the United Kingdom, for initiating this interactive discussion on how to make the United Nations partnership with Africa more productive.

In our view, this meeting and its format are a contribution, albeit a small one, to strengthening the partnership of the Security Council with Africa. We believe that it adds to the objective of observing transparency in the Council's work on African issues. The format should be made a regular feature of the Council's procedure.

The unfortunate aspect of speaking towards the end of a long list of delegations is that one is left with the option of not speaking at all or of merely repeating what others have said. We heard a number of good and constructive contributions on the subject under discussion this morning.

However, I am not going to take either option, since this is an interactive discussion. Ambassador Holbrooke's immediate response this morning to Ambassador Kumalo's comments gave the meeting this interactive character. I would like to react briefly to a couple of suggestions, some mentioned parenthetically and others in some detail, and to go into more detail on them.

Allow me to take the liberty of deviating from the beaten path. I will also be frank. First, let me say that we share most of the suggestions presented this morning in the areas of conflict prevention and resolution in Africa and on what the Security Council could do as a partner for peace and security in our continent.

As regards the four points raised by the Secretary-General on the preventive aspects of the partnership, we could add that the Council should assist him in making more frequent use of quiet diplomacy in addressing some of the conflicts — or potential conflicts — in the continent. The continent itself should throw its authoritative weight behind his initiative in sending, for example, fact-finding missions to potential conflict areas; this could help to defuse many of the potential conflicts and avert a crisis.

Having said that, I wish to suggest two points under the rubric of preventive intervention. In a sense, I shall elaborate on part of what some other representatives raised this morning — for example, the Gambia — on the question of intelligence or sharing information concerning arms delivery.

We believe that the Security Council could strengthen its partnership with Africa more effectively by what I call introspection. I think, Mr. President, that you used the word "exposing" this morning, and I would like to borrow that word. By "introspection" I mean "exposing" collectively, with one voice: naming names, including those of member States, including Security Council members, which foment conflict in Africa by covert means, which fan the flames of war and destruction through the illegal transfer of arms and ammunition to African countries. Others merely acquiesce when their nationals or agents are involved in this traffic. We believe that the Council should have the courage to at least identify and expose them.

We know from experience that internal conflicts in Africa have international dimensions. We heard this morning and this afternoon about the roots of conflict in Africa — poverty, disease and so on — but we sometimes forget about the external factor, the role of State and non-State actors in fomenting conflict in our continent. There is some reluctance on the part of some of the powerful Council members to exercise vigilance and exert pressure when necessary on the merchants of death and destruction in the continent.

On a related matter, we believe that the Security Council should build on the experience of what I think the Secretary-General described this morning as the Fowler ground-breaking work. I should describe it as the "Fowler formula" in Angola, regarding the relationship between diamonds and the lack of a solution to the conflict in Angola. The same could be applied to other areas where recalcitrant actors use minerals to extend and bankroll terror and instability in the continent.

Finally, we think that the Council should strengthen its partnership with Africa in the area of conflict prevention by taking action to dissuade Member States, starting with the members of the Security Council, including the permanent members, or some of the permanent members, from supporting and arming rebel movements, movements which destabilize many democratically elected Governments in Africa. These rebel movements exploit the legitimate grievances in some of our countries of some of our people — disaffected people — by launching armed conflict as a means of achieving political power for themselves.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), for its part, has taken the bold step of discouraging military coups in the continent. This, in our view, is a preventive measure. The Security Council could supplement that by expressing in a resolution, or in a declaration, or in some form or another, its commitment to discourage Member States, especially members of the Security Council, from supporting rebel movements and the illegal supply of arms to overthrow legitimate, internationally recognized Governments in Africa. With some kind of solution to that effect in place, we believe it would help solve and, where possible, prevent conflict in Africa.

Finally, I would like to follow up on what the representative of India said about the outcome of this meeting. We do not expect any formal resolution from the proceedings, Mr. President, but you will close with a summation. We believe that your summation should be made public; it should perhaps be issued as a document or a note — your note — to the Security Council for possible action by the Council at a later date.

The President: That was a very innovative suggestion, at an innovative meeting of the Security Council, for which I am grateful.

I thank the representative of Sierra Leone for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Uganda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Semakula Kiwanuka (Uganda): Speaking at the tail end of a long day, one suffers from the possibility of merely repeating what has already been said. I hope, Mr. President, you will be patient with my repetition. But first of all let me congratulate you and your delegation on having organized this interactive debate.

This is not the first time in the last 18 months that the Council has held such an open debate on Africa. Why are we here? It is not because of a lack of cooperation between the United Nations and regional bodies; not because the Organization of African Unity (OAU) mechanism has been ignored; not because there are not sufficient meetings; not because there is a shortage of special envoys to go and decipher the problems of Africa. We are here because of the continuing crisis in Africa, a

crisis of conflicts. We are here because this important body, in spite of the many debates we have held, has failed to take adequate action. We are here because there is an inadequacy of political will, and because of that inadequacy there are not sufficient resources to address the conflicts in Africa.

Meetings are very good, but what Africa needs now is action. I am reminded of the great explorer and missionary, David Livingstone, who is associated with the end of the slave trade. When he reached that part of Africa now called Malawi, he said that he was looking for a healer of Africa's bleeding soul. Africa was bleeding from the continued slave trade. Today, if Livingstone were to come back, he would say that he is looking for a healer of the African conflicts. That is why we are here.

I should like to divide my remarks into three parts. Africa needs immediate action. Immediate action means preventing conflicts, stopping the current conflicts and stopping them from spreading and escalating. Africa needs what we call in United Nations language "rapid deployment of peacekeepers". Without that, the various components of peace — not only in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, not only the Lusaka process, not only in Sierra Leone and elsewhere — still have the potential to disintegrate.

Peacekeepers separate combatants. Their presence prevents escalation; it enables fragile peace to take root. We have seen two recent examples of rapid deployment and their effects in Kosovo and in East Timor.

The Security Council did not say that the East Timorese should stop fighting before intervention. Similarly, in Kosovo the Council did not say that the combatants should honour the peace agreement before there could be United Nations intervention. We would like to see the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo addressed in the same way.

The Ambassador of Canada was right on the ball. I, as an African, would like to hear the sweet-sounding phrase "African solutions to African problems". But the truth is that many of our regional bodies do not have the capacity to address the African problems. That is why we come here; why we seek the partnership of the United Nations; why we are calling for action.

I said that the immediate problem needs immediate attention — that is, the stopping of conflicts. But we must also have a slightly longer focus, and that longer focus must, once again, be on prevention, but prevention of an economic development nature. We must look upon development as a conflict-prevention measure. Many statements have been made here, with which I agree, that poverty is a major cause.

Another aspect of prevention is a focus on democratic governance, respect for human rights, respect for law and the creation of inclusive political mechanisms or governments. We have repeated conflicts because many communities, perhaps ethnic communities, feel discriminated against, excluded. We need partnership so that Africa can build democratic structures, structures which will make citizens of our continent feel that they have ownership, not only in the economic system, but also in the political system. We need partnership to strengthen the existing States, because States play crucial roles in preventing conflicts, while ineffective leadership is exploited by those would like to disturb the peace.

We do not have to seek intricate solutions. We know what Africa needs: what Africa needs from this Security Council and from this meeting is action.

The President: I thank the representative of Uganda for his kind words addressed to me, and endorse his call for action.

The next speaker is the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): I shall try to be very brief. At the outset I should like to associate my delegation with all the positive statements that have been made. At this juncture I will just make a few comments and a few suggestions.

Let me start with the stark reality of Africa. Of the 48 least developed countries of the world, 33 are in Africa. I say this because there are many calls for Africa to take action, but it must be remembered that the objective conditions will determine what action Africa can take. The reality is that 33 of the 48 least developed countries are in Africa. That is point number one.

Secondly, there is a lot of emphasis on foreign direct investment. Only 1 per cent of foreign direct investment goes to Africa, and the majority of that goes to a handful of countries. That is another point that needs to be underscored.

Thirdly, Africa has the largest number of refugees. As I am speaking to the Council now, my own country has 800,000 refugees, and many more are coming in.

Finally, on the reality of Africa, aid is declining and there is much more rhetoric for helping Africa than there is substance.

Now, as to the suggestions, we are asking for action, as the representative of Uganda has said, but that action has to be focused. So I am suggesting that the Council has to have a plan to address the conflicts. Since we had the first debate on Africa — the ministerial debate under the presidency of the United States — there have been many resolutions adopted, and many more will be adopted. Where is the implementation schedule? There is a need to have an implementation schedule, an accountability; there should be reports as to what measures have been taken. We should not be satisfied with adopting resolutions and saying that this is action for Africa. This is inadequate; very, very inadequate.

The other point I would like to underscore is the commendation that has been voiced for the Fowler Committee on the good work they are doing. But the Committee and the work it is doing needs to be backed up by the Council. Without doing that, we will have the Council on one side, the Committee on the other, and Fowler at the top. That would be tragic.

Finally, Africa is listening very attentively to this debate, as it has listened to others for the last couple of years. Expectations are raised each time a debate takes place in the Council. You cannot blame the Africans.

I think that what the Council needs to do is to put its acts together so that, working with the Economic and Social Council, it could draft an economic blueprint — what I would call a Marshall Plan. Some people are allergic to this. When you talk about a Marshal Plan for Africa, they say "No, no, no". We need a Marshall Plan for Africa because, otherwise, we will just continue to have conflicts. Africans are not unique human beings. They need development like anybody else, as well as housing, food and schooling. There is need.

Your own Government, Mr. President, has taken some initiative in this regard. We need a bigger initiative, because the problems are greater. One of the fallacies about Africa is that it is seen as one country. It is a huge continent with 53 countries; but from the way in which it is reported in the media one gets the impression that Africa is a very small country. It is a huge continent.

That is my last point, Mr. President. We thank you for organizing this open debate. We hope there will be many more. But we hope also that the Council will sit down and see to what extent it can tap the reservoir of expertise and knowledge of the other non-members. I say this because the members themselves speak first when open debates are held, and then they bring us in after they have spoken and disappeared from the Council Chamber. The credibility of the Council is not very good in that respect.

The President: I am sure, Mr. Ambassador, that your last comment has been noted by us all.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Ghana. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Osei (Ghana): Ghana, like other Member States, considers this open meeting opportune, coming as it does on the eve of the millennium, and commends the Council for this initiative. It is also opportune because it enables the Council to assess the depth of the perception of many African States about selectivity by the Council in the execution of its cardinal mandate of maintaining international peace and security. Naturally, we welcome the considerable attention that the United Nations is now devoting to Africa, particularly the growing level of cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

The Secretary-General's introductory statement has set the tone for this ongoing interaction, and other key issues have also been amply stated by the members of the Council and other speakers. However, I wish to revisit the following points.

The first point is on the need for regular consultations. I would like to suggest that within the framework of consultations between the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the OAU, the Council may consider quarterly review meetings between the members of the Council and the Permanent Observer Mission of the OAU that could focus on pertinent issues of the continent with the objective of reaching understanding on mechanisms, not only for tackling those problems but, indeed, for appropriate follow-up action.

Secondly, on conflict management, we believe that the role of regional groups in the containment and resolution of conflicts cannot be underestimated. Efforts by African subregional groups such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to resolve civil strife on the continent have been constrained by the lack of moral and logistical support from the international community, especially the Security Council. As we all know, peacekeeping activities by regional groups in Africa have indeed had a very terrible effect on the meagre resources and economies of the countries that have provided such formed units. My own country's active participation in subregional peacekeeping has been based on the principles of good-neighbourliness and containment.

If I may dare suggest an aside, I suspect that the principle of containment may have its source in an old Ghanaian adage that says that if your neighbour's beard is on fire the sensible thing to do is to douse it with water, lest sparks from the fire threaten your own.

The provision of resources by the United Nations within the mandate of the Council would indeed strengthen the resolve and capacity of peacekeeping forces. Thus, the consideration of such conflicts by the Council should also move in parallel to preparations by regional forces to intervene and prevent the escalation of conflicts pending their management and resolution. The representatives of contributing countries may then be invited by the Council to discuss details of the operation and determine the appropriate level of support for the ongoing peacekeeping operation. In this regard, I believe that Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as other speakers have emphasized, offer a test of the Council's commitment to dealing with peacekeeping and peacemaking in Africa, with the deployment not only of a formed unit but also with civilian police participation.

Conflict prevention has also been recognized as being less costly in terms of human and material resources than conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. Since Africa has wholly embraced democracy and good governance, the Council should come out strongly against attempts by any groups or individuals which are aimed at destabilizing democratically elected Governments. A most effective measure would be the strong imposition of sanctions on such groups, and, if possible, their supporters, where they can be identified. This should be scrupulously monitored, with the aim of penalizing countries that flout the Council's decisions. In this regard, we commend Ambassador Fowler's initiatives on Angola.

The last area of concern I would like to touch on is the proliferation of conventional weapons, notably small and light arms, since they are tools for violence and conflict in Africa. It has already been noted by a member of the Council this morning that African countries do not sell arms; neither do they buy diamonds. The Council must be seen to be actively engaged in securing international cooperation and coordination in the struggle against the accumulation, proliferation and widespread use of small arms. Support for regional and subregional efforts is therefore critical and deserving of the Council's attention.

Finally, Mr. President, let me commend the able manner in which you have conducted our proceedings so far.

The President: I thank the representative of Ghana for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Zimbabwe. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Muchetwa (Zimbabwe): My delegation welcomes this interactive debate on the prevention of conflict and promotion of durable peace in Africa, and it is our fervent hope that a programme of action will emerge from today's exercise.

The causes of conflict in Africa are known to members of the Council. In the past, the Security Council has proposed measures that, when put in place, could preclude the occurrence of conflicts on the African continent. This notwithstanding, my delegation would like to zero in on the following issues raised by the President. I shall be very brief, because most of the issues have already been covered by previous speakers.

First, on improving cooperation and coordination between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the OAU should, on a regular basis and whenever necessary, send documentation through the Secretariat for the Council's consideration. Such documentation could cover early warning systems of possible hot spots in Africa and recommend what action needs to be taken in order to avert the possible resumption of conflict. In areas already in conflict, the Security Council, in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity, should expeditiously work towards a quick resolution of the conflict.

Secondly, let me turn to the question of meeting the needs for African peacekeeping more effectively. Because more than 50 per cent of the Security Council's agenda is absorbed by African issues, mostly conflicts, the Security Council should think about setting aside some kind of a fund for purposes of conflict prevention and peacekeeping. We say this because much of the reasoning behind a delay in deploying forces is funding-related. A United Nations force should be in place for rapid deployment, and the force should also be armed with the appropriate mandate and the concomitant power and logistical support.

Thirdly, let me touch on the question of additional instruments necessary to effect peacekeeping and the promotion of durable peace. These have already been fully enunciated by previous speakers, such as the need to have the political will in the Council to effect resolutions, and such as being fair in terms of the way African issues are treated in comparison to other areas of conflict.

All in all, what I am trying to say here, at the risk of repeating myself, is that there must be that political will, and that Council members must cease highlighting national interests at the expense of international peace and security. We believe that the instruments are already at hand within the Council. It is up to the Council to have the necessary will and the necessary guts to cease doing this and make sure that peace and tranquillity prevail in Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Zimbabwe for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Burundi. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the British presidency's initiative of convening this open debate, which is clearly of interest to everyone and offers them the opportunity to speak about the situation in Africa and the best way of achieving cooperation among the various actors in Africa.

Why does the United Nations find it difficult to act quickly and effectively in the area of conflict prevention and resolution in Africa? No doubt this is primarily because of procrastination, which itself results from ignorance about Africa or a lack of credible information about situations. Sometimes the reason is too much conflicting information, because there are so many different parties involved. A wait-and-see attitude can also hinder the prevention or resolution of an African conflict. That attitude often springs from the existence of one or more actors that also wish to take action, as in the case of competition with another country or within a region. All of this leads to a vicious circle and a worsening of the situation, which makes conflict inevitable.

The second cause of difficulties is the lack of interest among certain members of the Council about the situation in Africa. There has been a lot of talk about double standards, as if the goal of saving human lives, regardless of nationality or place of origin, is less noble than the objective of protecting one's own interests. We understand that some prefer to act only when their own interests are threatened.

The third category relates to errors in assessing the situation in Africa. There is a desire to generalize or resort to stereotypes instead of gaining an in-depth understanding of the specifics — the nature of the problem, the historical roots, the culture of Africa. Often, therefore, the focus is on the political dimension — or, since this is Africa, on the ethnic dimension — even though, in some situations, economic or social factors are dominant.

What, then, can be done? The idea of partnership is an excellent one. It must be applied in a way that leads to coordinated and wise action. The partnership between the United Nations and Africa must be built on certain foundations.

The first of these is collaboration with the States. First and foremost, States must be consulted, whether or not they are democratic, and whether or not they respect human rights. Coercive action must be taken only when all efforts at consultation have been exhausted. We must avoid the tendency to teach lessons.

Secondly, in the case of internal conflicts, we must take the time to help Africans to move beyond the psychological barriers and the burden of their past. For example, the Great Lakes region has been hit with recurrent violence and genocide, and we must approach the situation with great care. The delicate nature of situations of internal conflict requires that great importance be accorded to discreet diplomacy, without overlooking the resident representatives of the United Nations, special envoys, mediators, investigative missions and good office missions.

Thirdly, there must be cooperation with the recognized regional mechanisms. In this context, a

somewhat contradictory situation is prevailing. The region wants to play the primary role — and it is encouraged to do so — up until the point at which it decides for itself how other international actors can take part. That is the best approach to take if all the regional players are acting in good faith. However, the United Nations, acting through the Security Council, must remain vigilant. If we want to resort to the partnership between the United Nations, the OAU and the regions, we must do so from the ground upwards; otherwise we might find ourselves violating the Charter and international law.

The Security Council must endorse all major interventions - only the Council has this mandate - such as sending a regional peacekeeping force or imposing economic sanctions. Otherwise, it will have to take later and more difficult corrective action.

Fourthly, we must pay more attention to economic and development issues in resolving conflicts in Africa. Here, the role played by the Bretton Woods institutions, the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations agencies and funds is important. Often, regional or international solutions can make situations worse by freezing aid or imposing economic sanctions on a country that is already in difficulties, a country which is poor, land-locked and lacking resources. Imposing sanctions and freezing aid can have a disastrous impact on the population and not on the Government. Rather, durable solutions should be advocated, such as viable economic integration.

Fifthly, the working methods of the Security Council must be adapted accordingly. Open debates such as this should be encouraged, as they enhance transparency and provide for mutual enrichment. Informal consultations must be organized in New York between the representatives of various interested parties. Africa should have permanent representation in the Security Council so that its voice can be heard more clearly, and so that African problems can be better understood.

Finally, we hope that this great exercise of reflection on the part of the Security Council on the best way to contribute to conflict resolution and prevention in Africa will lead to concrete, concerted measures which strengthen both partnership and mutual respect.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Zambia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kasanda (Zambia): My delegation joins with previous speakers in thanking you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting. Fortunately, what started as an experiment under the Dutch presidency is now developing into what could become a tangible practice, which we hope will be part of the Council's culture of business.

My delegation listened with great interest to the contributions on the subject before us by many delegations this morning and this afternoon. We welcome the frank admissions that the Council has been hesitant and sometimes unwilling to take effective and timely action relative to conflict situations in Africa. We welcome the apparent new commitment on the part of Council members to afford Africa and its problems the priority attention they deserve. The Council must banish the shadow of Somalia, which led to such a negative reaction to the Rwandan tragedy and which has continued to haunt new efforts at conflict reduction and prevention in Africa. We hope that the time has come when the Security Council will not hesitate to summon the political will necessary to address conflict situations in Africa now and in the future.

With regard to cooperation between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), my delegation is in agreement with several suggestions already made by many delegations, such as encouraging more visits by the OAU Secretary-General and his officials to consult with the Council on matters of common interest. The OAU, however, is essentially a political organization, and its military and logistical capacity for conflict prevention and resolution are limited. It is in that area, therefore, that support is critically needed.

We believe also that the Council should widen its sources in the consultative process. I refer to the need to involve parties closely affected by a conflict that the Council is considering. Here, I recall the Security Council meeting held on 21 September 1999, at which the President of Zambia, who served as mediator on the Democratic Republic of the Congo, had a very useful exchange with the Council. As the representative of India said, one hopes that these meetings are not essentially symbolic, but that the Council will actually look at what its visitors — those it is consulting — say and will consider it and see what it can do with it.

As to the means of African peacekeeping, we should look at the peace missions themselves. Here, planning

should be comprehensive, and missions should be mandated for periods longer than the traditional three to six months, a period that is too short properly to assess the chances of a mission's success or failure.

Also, the strength of a mission should be commensurate with the job to be performed. For example, we are told that in Sierra Leone combatants number about 45,000; the United Nations force that has been put in place numbers about 6,000. It is not difficult to see that it is very hard for a force of that strength to carry out normal peacekeeping duties and then carry out the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme as well.

With respect to additional instruments, I agree with Ambassador Fowler of Canada that it is not a question of additional instruments; it is more a question of improving the quality of the measures already in place. Ambassador Fowler's new and improved sanctions regime against UNITA is a case in point, and my delegation looks forward to the publication of the sanctions Committee's report in February 2000.

As mentioned by several delegations in one form or another, where our action is necessary is in providing a mechanism to investigate arms trafficking and to stop arms from being exported to areas of conflict in Africa. Voluntary moratoriums on arms exports do not work. It is therefore absolutely necessary publicly to expose private companies and national Governments that put profit before human lives. Public censure, we believe, cannot fail to be a positive instrument for conflict reduction.

The President: I thank the representative of Zambia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Norway. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): I thank you, Mr. President, for this timely initiative.

Norway remains firmly committed to peace and development in Africa, and we welcome this opportunity to discuss suggestions and ideas for improving the effectiveness of the United Nations in its partnership with the African continent. We believe that it is important, first, to build a comprehensive approach to conflicts in Africa and, secondly, to develop effective cooperation with African institutions. By a comprehensive approach, we are thinking of the capacity of the United Nations to prevent conflicts, to apply a set of measures attuned to the various stages of a conflict, and to support post-conflict measures.

On the question of the prevention of conflict, we all agree that there is a need now to move from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention, as the Secretary-General has put it. We must strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to conduct preventive diplomacy. In that connection, my Government would appeal to other donor countries to support the Trust Fund for Preventive Action.

Effective programmes for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants are of crucial importance in establishing comprehensive peace operations. It is a fact that the presence of a large number of small arms and light weapons can be a major destabilizing factor, can undermine the security of war-affected populations, and can threaten the safety of international peacekeepers and humanitarian personnel. The international community should provide the necessary resources for such programmes to address such challenges effectively.

Poverty, underdevelopment and violent conflict are closely linked. A significant challenge for the United Nations as a whole is to ensure that the measures decided upon by the Security Council work in tandem with other efforts, such as those of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies, as well as those of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the regional banks.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU), representing all African countries, has a particularly important role to play in promoting peace and stability in Africa. Close collaboration among the OAU, the United Nations and national Governments is needed to resolve conflicts on the African continent. While we believe that the United Nations is the organization best suited to lead and coordinate complex multi-functional peace operations, it will often need to draw on regional and subregional organizations when military forces are called for. It is therefore important to strengthen regional capacity for participation in peace operations. Norway is contributing to that end.

Furthermore, the United Nations should work closely with regional organizations in order to establish common principles for training personnel and units intended for participation in peace operations. In our

view, it is important also to establish common organizational structures for interaction between the United Nations and the regional organizations in question, and to improve effective multi-functional planning and coordination. In order to realize those important aims, those Member countries with greater financial resources and extensive experience in peace operations should provide funding and personnel to establish a self-sustaining peacekeeping capacity within the regional security organizations.

In conclusion, let me mention that today a number of suggestions have been put forward on how to improve the effectiveness of the United Nations in its partnership with Africa. My delegation would like to emphasize, however, that, in order for such ideas to be implemented, sufficient resources are needed. We therefore call on the international community to increase its support to the United Nations and to African regional and subregional organizations in order to strengthen their capacity to meet the security and development concerns of Africa.

The President: I thank the representative of Norway for the kind words he addressed to me.

Let me thank my colleagues in the European Union who will be addressing the Council, who have agreed to limit their contributions to two minutes, which is very good of them. It does not imply any lesser contribution to Africa's interests.

The next speaker is the representative of Indonesia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Wibisono (Indonesia): My delegation is delighted, Sir, to see you presiding over the work of the Security Council today. I congratulate you on your delegation's assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of December. We have every confidence that under the able and skilful hand of Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock the Council will deal successfully with the issues before it. Allow me also to extend our congratulations to Ambassador Danilo Türk, the Permanent Representative of Slovenia, on his skilful stewardship of the Council's activities last month.

The Indonesian delegation takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to you, Sir, and to the other members of the Council for convening this interactive discussion at a critical juncture for the African continent. We also commend the choice of format for today's discussion, which enhances the possibility for further involvement by Member States not members of the Security Council in the discussion of issues before the Council. We look forward to the application of such a format to the discussion of other crucial issues concerning the maintenance of international peace and security.

Before proceeding further, I should like also to convey our sincere gratitude to the Secretary-General for his opening remarks, which focused our attention on his innovative suggestions and ideas for improving the partnership between the United Nations and Africa.

As we all know, the African continent has for long time been plagued by internal and cross-border conflicts that show only marginal signs of ending. As democratic Africa blooms, war-torn Africa bleeds. While African States such as Nigeria have consigned their internal wars to the past, others are still locked in a seemingly endless cycle of revolution and violence. Regrettably, half of the violent conflicts in the world are in Africa. The reality also is that the worst-hit victims are not the combatants, but the millions of innocent civilians caught in the middle.

In addressing these complex and interrelated issues, the General Assembly and the Security Council have held a myriad of discussions and have even taken decisions on Africa in this past year, on both generic and focused issues. Those discussions have provided the opportunity to take stock of the problems faced by Africa, and thereby enabled the submission of several thoughtful suggestions.

However, the magnitude of problems facing Africa is still enormous. Before commenting on the three basic questions put forward by the presidency, allow me to make the following remarks. It is not erroneous to assume that wherever conflicts take place, the population in question holds the key to their settlement. Nevertheless, as the Secretary-General stated in his report, those nations making good-faith efforts and adopting enlightened policies deserve much greater support than they are now receiving. It is clear that the predicament in Africa can be attributed to a lack of sincere and thorough commitment by the international community, particularly the Security Council, both in providing adequate personnel in pursuit of peacekeeping and conflict-prevention efforts and in providing the necessary funds to sustain them. While we welcome the generous contribution of the United Kingdom to the

United Nations Trust Fund for Improving Preparedness for Conflict Prevention and Peacekeeping in Africa, it is deplorable that the Fund, as an example of several funds intended for Africa within the Organization, has received only one contribution, of $250,745.

My delegation shares the view that if the international community, especially Member States which have been blessed with surplus resources, could demonstrate a genuine commitment to Africa, that would, without doubt, increase the prospects of success in peacemaking and conflict prevention efforts on that continent and also pave the way to sustainable development efforts in a post-conflict peace-building era.

In this context, and in relation to the first and third questions, on improving coordination and cooperation between the Security Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the key subregional organizations, and also on creating additional instruments of the Council for tackling the issue of Africa, we would like to convey our deepest appreciation for the role played by the OAU, key subregional organizations and several African States which have contributed significantly in pursuit of conflict settlement. In the endeavours to improve coordination between the Council and these regional organizations, it might be most beneficial if representatives from each organization could meet simultaneously in order to establish terms of reference to be used as a basis for promoting concrete coordination and cooperation between the organizations on an agreed footing and in accordance with the provisions of the Charter.

In situations where the basis has been laid out and agreed upon, one could envision the possibility of establishing a Security Council team on Africa, consisting of several members of the Council, with one representative for each regional group and supported consensually by all the members of the Council. It would have the dual function of serving as a clearing house for information on African issues in the Council and of submitting concrete recommendations in close coordination with the Office of the Secretary-General, the OAU, key subregional organizations and relevant African countries on issues of peacemaking and conflict prevention. The establishment of such a mechanism could also serve as an early warning system in order to prevent major humanitarian disasters in the future.

In addressing the second question, on meeting the needs for African peacekeeping more effectively, several main issues need to be highlighted. In our view, while welcoming the recommendation made by the Secretary-General in his latest report on Africa that it should support regional and subregional initiatives in the areas of conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace, based on agreements with the regional organization and the host country, the Security Council should also explore the possibility of establishing a preventive deployment force, as in Europe, in order to prevent the spread of conflicts to other areas.

It is my delegation's belief, too, that in the efforts to bolster the capabilities of African peacekeeping, the endeavour to increase the quantity and quality of national and regional capability should be well supported, with the involvement of the international community, including in areas of training and information exchange within the framework of the United Nations system, as discussed at the special meeting convened by the Secretariat, in coordination with the OAU on 21 January 1999, in which 51 states, including African States, participated.

In addressing the issue of African peacekeeping capabilities, especially in terms of real time, it is worth noting that the standby arrangements system under the United Nations needs to be further pursued, not only by African States, but also by other countries. Let me take this opportunity to convey the information that Indonesia is now considering the possibility of further increasing our peacekeeping participation in Africa.

Finally, it is my delegation's fervent hope that our discussion today will enrich our coordinated approach to the issues of the maintenance of peace and security in Africa, and in no way give room for the encroachment of Afro-pessimism or even Africa fatigue in the international community as a whole.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Sweden. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Dahlgren (Sweden): I will focus, Mr. President, on your question of additional instruments for the Council, in particular on the arms embargoes in Africa. My point is that the Security Council must be much more serious about ensuring that there are efficient mechanisms to implement these arms embargoes. Anyone who has travelled in an embargoed country, or who has sat on a sanctions Committee, knows how wide is the gap between what is said in Council resolutions and what is actually going on on the ground, including in these

African States. That discrepancy is undermining the authority of this Council, and we have to deal with that also. As you yourself, Mr. President, said this morning, now it is time to make sanctions bite. The question is "how?" I will present three ideas.

First, individual Member States have clear responsibility to prevent exports from and to prevent transfers through, their own countries. That common responsibility can in many cases be much better respected.

Secondly, the sanctions Committees must be more active. Ambassador Fowler has shown clearly how these Committees can do much more than they have done before. Council members have given the Committees the very important task of monitoring and implementing arms embargoes, and they must be much better equipped to carry out that task, to improve information gathering, to get the best intelligence available, to follow every lead when breaches are reported and to act forcefully when breaches are confirmed. Only then, I think, will their actions be enough of a deterrent to help halt illegal arms transfers.

Thirdly, the monitoring capacity on the ground must improve. That can be achieved through better cooperation, perhaps, with the regional organizations. United Nations peacekeepers themselves could probably also be more operational. And perhaps, in addition to regular peacekeepers, a case could be made for the deployment of personnel who could assist neighbouring States in the regular patrolling and checking of border crossings.

Making a serious effort to implement arms embargoes will involve both political will and additional resources. Some will truly ask "Can the United Nations afford more expenses?" My answer is that if one can stop a war that takes the lives of thousands of people, primarily innocent civilians, by being better at implementing arms embargoes, that is a price well worth paying.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Ireland. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Ireland. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ryan (Ireland): I associate Ireland with Ambassador van Walsum's acknowledgement this morning of the United Kingdom and the United States, as the Council presidencies that will straddle the millennium, for their initiatives in Council procedures today and next month. We, too, will await the creative initiatives of future presidencies in this regard. I also associate Ireland fully with the statement made this morning by Finland on behalf of the European Union.

We have listened very carefully to a useful debate in which delegations made a wide range of suggestions. The Council itself already referred to a number of these in its presidential statement of 30 November. In that statement, the Council reaffirmed its commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security. It is my delegation's conviction that from now on this commitment will be tested principally in Africa.

I would like to stress the central role of the Organization of African Unity, both today under Algerian chairmanship and henceforth. We have seen the emergence of a number of important African subregional organizations which have become actively engaged in the work of conflict prevention and resolution. Individual African leaders have also engaged actively in the search for peace. As the Ambassador of Cameroon pointed out, this has opened the possibility of the application of Articles 52 and 53 of the Charter of the United Nations. This is a highly positive development, deserving the strongest possible support.

However, a developed capacity for conflict prevention at the regional and subregional levels in Africa cannot be created overnight, or by the Security Council on its own. Given its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has a duty to give the necessary impetus to this process and to ensure that the required resources are available. It is not satisfactory that urgent efforts are made to provide the necessary support at the regional level only when disputes are well on the way to becoming, or have already become, large-scale conflicts.

The point has been made strongly here today that for a peacekeeping operation to succeed the parties to the dispute or the conflict must demonstrate their willingness to make and keep the peace. Such willingness is, of course, central. But there is another consideration, and that is the credibility of a peace process and of the Council itself. Without such credibility the parties are so much less likely to respect a peace process or to heed the calls made on them by the Council. An impression of foot-dragging by the Council could be as fatal to a peace process as the bad faith of belligerents. From this derives

the essential need for the Council to take, and to be seen to take, prompt and decisive action.

Finally, several participants have referred to the economic causes and consequences of conflict. The Secretary-General and some others have stressed the nexus between peace and development. African and non-African Member States, including my own, are partners in development, the importance of which was stressed by the Ambassador of Uganda. Very considerable resources have been and must continue to be committed to providing Africa with the necessary investment for development. It is hardly sensible therefore to place this appropriate, necessary investment at risk for the sake of the relatively very modest resources that would make all the difference in ensuring effective peacekeeping in Africa.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Adam (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Unlike you, Mr. President, I was not born in Africa, but I spent many years of my life there, and like you I am very aware of the woes and misfortunes that continent suffers.

I would like to endorse what was said earlier on behalf of the European Union by the representative of Finland. I have also been listening keenly to what my African colleagues have said here. I would like simply to respond on three points.

First, as regards AIDS, I heard Ambassador Holbrooke's comments this morning and would like to fully endorse them. AIDS kills more people than war, and AIDS kills as war does. That is, it is a disease that kills people in the prime of life, people capable of being productive and creative. The survivors are children and the elderly, who are thus condemned to live in ever-worsening poverty. So I believe that our countries must do more to mitigate the effects of this epidemic.

Unfortunately, AIDS is not the only disease. There is malaria, which remains a tragic scourge in Africa, and other diseases, such as sleeping sickness, which continues to cause major devastation, particularly because it often strikes practically impenetrable parts of the continent.

Secondly, there are the expectations of African countries. I heard a variety of comments made here about this. Some speakers have talked of procrastination, others about double standards. It is true that if we decide to wait until the conditions are ideal for intervening in Africa — I am afraid that such ideal conditions will never see the light of day. If we wait for conditions to be perfect before we undertake a perfect operation, we will never do anything.

We are told that the United Nations is no longer entitled to make mistakes. I believe that, unfortunately, all human endeavours are subject to error from time to time, and we must assume a certain amount of risk.

Thus, I am brought to my third point: the Africans themselves. During the debate chaired by the Prime Minister of the Netherlands a few months ago, I said — and I believe it is worth repeating here — that the Africans must help us help them. I have in mind in particular a country with which we have very close ties, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Lusaka process. We would like to see the African parties to that conflict more directly involved in the implementation of the commitments they made in Lusaka. On the contrary, however, we are hearing a lot of rumours of war and of military reinforcements, a lot of threats coming from the various fronts of that complex and devastating war.

I appeal to my African friends. They must help us help them. There must be a change in attitude; a commitment to peace must take hold. Too many regions of Africa and too many people in Africa believe that the only way to improve their lot is to take up arms. I think this is a mistake. I think we must offer other prospects based on both North-South and South-South partnership.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Monteiro (Portugal): Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and for giving me the floor. I am another humble son of Africa. I can be added to the list. I was born and raised in the continent, and so I can be added to the list of the Ambassador of the Bahamas.

The first conclusion I would like to draw from this meeting is that we have to work harder to utilize the range of instruments already available. Let me discuss a few of these specifically.

The first is that the United Nations should work more closely with regional and subregional organizations. The United Nations cannot abdicate its duty to maintain

international peace and security by delegating that responsibility to African regional or subregional organizations. However, when the United Nations seeks their assistance and participation — a mechanism that should be encouraged — it has to be ensured that those organizations have all the means necessary to carry out those functions.

Secondly, I want to address the issue of the insufficient use of preventive diplomacy, such as fact-finding missions, Security Council missions and other similar instruments. I must recall the effectiveness of the Security Council mission to Jakarta last September, which greatly facilitated our work in East Timor. At the same time, I cannot forget how difficult it was to establish it. Thus, I believe that we have to use more of these instruments and other missions — missions, for instance, of representatives of the Secretary-General. I must here remember and pay homage to the mission that Maître Blondin Beye was undertaking when he died — a mission to some African capitals, undertaken in the eleventh hour in the hope of getting support to persuade Jonas Savimbi to abide by the Lusaka Protocol.

I would also like to discuss the idea of preventive deployment. Why has the previous success with preventive deployment in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for instance, not been replicated elsewhere, and particularly in Africa?

Another instrument that was referred to by previous speakers is that of targeted sanctions. This very important, but the work of the sanctions committees should not be bureaucratic but businesslike. Committees should regularly evaluate their own work and become proactive in fulfilling their mandates. The Council should encourage this trend and add its political weight whenever necessary. If this does not happen, arms embargoes, for instance, will continue to be the farce that they currently are.

In the context of the sanctions committees, I must praise the work carried out by Ambassador Fowler. This is a good example that should now be followed.

We know, however, that there are no quick fixes for solving African problems. That is precisely why we strongly support urgent and sustained action, as was requested this morning by the Secretary-General.

Let me stress the importance of an ingredient usually missing when the Security Council deals with conflicts in Africa. I refer to what is boldly termed "post-conflict peace-building". This is a very important idea that was long refused linkage here in the Security Council and that some consider to be a General Assembly instrument. I believe that it can be used in certain situations, particularly now that we are thinking about deploying a peacekeeping operation to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I think this peacekeeping operation should be followed by elements of peace-building. That is why I recall the idea of convening an international conference on the Great Lakes region.

I wish to say one final word to state the obvious. There should be no competition for allocation of resources between different regions of the globe. As the Secretary-General reminded us this morning, this Organization has to provide the tools, including financial ones, to implement its own resolutions and decisions.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Francese (Italy): I am particularly glad to be speaking at the end of this very interesting debate because this has been an occasion for learning, an occasion for developing further new ideas on how to tackle an area of the world that is at the centre of the interest and affections of my own country.

We are also particularly glad to work under your guidance tonight in this debate, Sir, for two reasons. The first is the substance of the issue, which is very central and very topical to the interests and responsibilities of the United Nations. The topical character of the African issue resides not solely in military threats to peace and security in that region, but also in the many non-military threats. I can mention here epidemics, smuggling, minority problems and other social and economic weaknesses that the United Nations has to tackle with all the powers, instruments and mechanisms at its disposal.

The second reason, of course, is that we appreciate how the British delegation, in charge of the presidency of the Security Council this month, decided to hold this meeting with modalities that allow a wide representation of Member States to express their views in such a very important forum as the Security Council.

Allow me to say at the beginning of my brief statement that we endorse fully what was said earlier by the Permanent Representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union. I therefore wish to confine my

comments to two basic areas. The first is better use of existing mechanisms and instruments of the Charter. We can consider that the Charter contains a number of instruments that can be optimized. I might refer, for instance, to Article 65, which has a history of not being employed. I would refer, too, to another initiative and proposal which was advanced in the General Assembly by the President of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) himself, who emphasized the role of the open-ended working group that the General Assembly decided at its fifty-third session to set up but has not yet acted on. This working group could make sure that Africa remains at the top of the priorities of the United Nations. As the Secretary-General himself pointed out in his address of 8 December, the working group should consolidate and ensure the consistency of efforts to implement such a high priority. Otherwise, the proliferation of initiatives would threaten to create more problems than solutions.

At this stage, Sir, allow me to enter into an interactive mode with you, because you made some very interesting proposals at the beginning of this meeting. You referred to how illegal trafficking worsens some specific regional and subregional crises in Africa. I should like to refer to the case of United Nations organs, such as the sanctions committees, that are sometimes not used to their full potential. We have examples of sanctions committees that have not been used for an extended number of years.

Also, you referred to the Security Council's need for better readiness to act in connection with various crises. Readiness would require, first of all, financial resources. I will not return to a point that has been widely addressed tonight and I can but underline the validity of proposals made on how to reinforce the readiness of the United Nations in the field of finances for peacekeeping.

Also, you yourself mentioned, Sir, and quite rightly — we could not be in greater agreement with you — the need for better logistical readiness. Here again, this is an area where more can be done along the lines of what has already been done in similar areas. I would just refer to the existence of a logistics base for humanitarian intervention that is located in the middle of the Mediterranean area, very close to most of the peace and security crises that have erupted of late. Something along the same lines could be done to ensure a better readiness of equipment for peacekeeping interventions.

I would refer to how the Security Council itself can take better initiatives, for instance in the way of missions in areas of crisis. I would just give a word of warning. In this instance, the Security Council should take better account of what has already been done by subregional organizations and groups of interested countries active in specific areas of crisis because they are located there or because they have historical or other links of interest and cooperation with that very area.

The second comment I would like to make is that we welcome a focus on existing political resources. Of course, we welcome attempts to prevent overlapping or duplication of mediation efforts. At the same time, we support initiatives to focus the resources of all interested actors on a common effort within the framework of the United Nations. For instance, we deem to be very useful mechanisms established to bring together here at the United Nations countries and organizations interested in specific countries, such as happened in the cases of Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau and Somalia. We support greater use of contact groups and special conferences. In this regard, we feel that it might be advisable to ensure in these cases the presence of the European Union Presidency, due to the role that Europe as a whole plays in Africa in cooperation and other efforts.

In particular, the special meeting convened on 21 January 1999 by the Secretariat, in coordination with the OAU, addressed ways and means of supporting African peacekeeping capacity. We hope that another such meeting will be convened at the beginning of the coming year, this time with the participation of the Organization of African Unity and of the subregional organizations most concerned.

In the end, we appreciate most of the proposals advanced today and fully endorse the pragmatic ideas that the Secretary-General himself presented at the opening of this meeting.

Now, words must be turned into action. Words must be turned into steps to shorten the time it takes for the Council to act and grant greater authority and effectiveness to its actions to find solutions to specific crises. We want to reverse the impression that has been voiced authoritatively in the General Assembly, even of late, by one of the prominent permanent representatives of Africa to the United Nations when he said that the arguments often advanced for inaction or delays had led Africans to believe that there was selective treatment from the Security Council and that the United Nations as a whole was discriminating against Africa. It is the responsibility of all of us, especially those countries better equipped in terms of national means and

resources — and all Member States in any case — to ensure that a different message gets out — namely, that the United Nations is prepared to stake its credibility on Africa.

The President: The next speaker is the representative of Spain. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Flores (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation endorses the statement made by the representative of Finland on behalf of the European Union and emphasizes the importance of this debate, convened by the British presidency of the Security Council, as a wake-up call to the international community on the magnitude of Africa's problems and the need to devote the same interest and resources to them that are devoted to other parts of the world.

With respect to conflict prevention, the fact that the Security Council is preventively addressing any particular problem is in and of itself a powerful deterrent. The instruments available are familiar to all. In all such Security Council action, we believe that it is crucial to preserve three action-oriented criteria. We must maintain the unity of the Security Council to prevent differences among members from leading to stalemates. We must improve the transparency of the Council's working methods — this debate being a good example thereof — in order to broaden the basis of support for its decisions. The mechanisms of the Charter must be fully respected, in particular the role set aside for the Security Council and for the Secretary-General's preventive diplomacy.

With regard to peacekeeping operations, what is crucial is United Nations coordination with the African regional and subregional organizations and cooperation by the international community to strengthen the African capacities in these operations. In this context, Spain has participated in the Gabon 2000 exercise and has recently signed a memorandum with the Secretariat to make rapid deployment forces available to the United Nations.

Finally, concerning conflict resolution, the processes for disarming and reintegrating combatants into civil and political life of the country are fundamental. The case of Central America provides a good example of what can be achieved when these reconciliation and reconstruction measures are correctly implemented. Strengthening democratic institutions and modernizing the police and civil safety are also important.

The President: There are no further speakers inscribed on my list, but I should like to make some concluding remarks myself as Council President.

I first of all welcome back the Secretary-General to join us. I thank everybody for entering into the spirit of this debate. The willingness, for the most part, to keep interventions brief and to the point has allowed us to cover a great deal of ground. I would have preferred to have had time for greater interaction afterwards. I know that, for example, the Ambassador of the Netherlands would have like to have come back, but as we learn this format — and I note that the Ambassador of Sierra Leone has asked that it become a regular feature of Security Council debates, and no doubt that will be considered — perhaps greater interaction could proceed to great benefit.

A lot of useful ideas and suggestions have been made, and we heard a lot today about double standards. We must replace double standards by common purpose. We must replace divided counsels by common action, and today's debate is a big step forward in doing so. I intend to make the conclusions public, as was requested, and distribute them to all United Nations Member States. I hope this will feed into the Council's future work.

First of all, there was a broad consensus that we should try to institute regular and more structured consultations and coordination between the Council and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the regional bodies. A number of useful suggestions have been made, such as joint envoys, missions, exchanges of staff, working groups and more regular meetings between the Security Council, the OAU and subregional bodies. I hope that the Council will now work up some detailed proposals so that decisions can be taken before the end of January on what they should be doing and how.

Second, we heard views today, particularly from African Member States, which send a clear message. The United Nations is not responding quickly or effectively enough to meet the peacekeeping needs of Africa. We heard today many useful, practical suggestions: increasing capacity and planning in the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, enhancing its ability to hold more stocks of key equipment and quickly deploy them; and further United Nations help to build Africa's own peacekeeping capabilities, including through training, personnel exchange and logistics partnership arrangements. These are all critical elements in the package, and the Council has today given strong support for taking them forward.

Participants have been equally clear that providing the right resources is critical. The importance of matching resources to mandates has also been widely stressed. So have the limitations of trust-fund financing for peacekeeping. More support for regional peacekeeping efforts were stressed by a number of delegations.

But it is clear from the debate today that none of these measures is a substitute for greater political engagement from the Council in conflicts in Africa. Only with that will there be greater engagement by the United Nations in peacekeeping there and greater success as a result.

A wide variety of important proposals have been raised today: preventive deployments; more use of Security Council missions; imaginative use of friends or contacts or other forms of support groups; better cooperation between the Council and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), especially in building peace after conflicts; better use of the variety of diplomatic channels available to us; improved coordination cooperation with regional and subregional groups; more effective collective diplomatic action by the Council and wider United Nations membership; and stricter and more targeted implementation of the Council's other key tool: sanctions and arms embargoes.

Many speakers stressed the crucial importance of preventive action to address root causes of conflict. I also endorse calls for greater focus on AIDS prevention. Five thousand five hundred Africans are dying a day from AIDS, as the Secretary-General has previously reported to us. I agree too that ensuring the rights of minorities and genuine power-sharing in divided societies is important to prevent conflict.

Many speakers have pointed to the need for better early warning and exchange of analysis. If this is to succeed, we must all — the Secretariat, the OAU and United Nations Member States — contribute. Potential conflict zones must be brought to the Council's attention, enabling it to act in time. It is the responsibility of all of us to use the Council to do this and to strengthen existing early-warning mechanisms, including those of the OAU.

I intend to return to the Council to participate in one or more of the United States presidency's Africa meetings. I shall ask our permanent representative to start work with others around this table to ensure action by the Council as quickly as possible following this meeting. I hope that we will see the first results within the next few weeks. Today's debate shows that all of us want to move quickly.

I want to conclude with an observation. Africa still gets a very bad press, and Africa has many real problems. But all of those who know and love Africa know that Africa can and will build a better future for itself, a future of peace, prosperity and democracy. The people who will build lasting peace in Africa are the people of Africa itself. But it is our duty to help them. Today's debate shows that the Council and the wider United Nations membership are indeed resolved to do so.

In my presidency capacity, I thank all of those who contributed to today's debate and apologize to all of those who have been unable to speak.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.